

REMARKS

Claims 1-29 are pending. Claims 2, 7, 9, and 21 are amended.

Claim 2, 8, 9, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter.

Applicant respectfully traverses claim 8. In reference to claims 2, 9, and 21, Applicant has amended claims 2, 9 and 21 to correct antecedent basis issues for each respective claim. Therefore, the rejection to claims 2, 9, and 21 should be reversed.

Claim 8 is rejected as being indefinite because it is unclear as to what the phrase “Fig. 8” means. It should be noted that the original claims as submitted recites “figure 8” as opposed to “Fig. 8”. The term “figure 8” was changed by the publication of the USPTO and not by an action or under the direction of the Applicant. The term “a figure 8” refers to the shape of the closed curve as opposed to referencing “Fig. 8” in the drawings. Therefore, the rejection of claim 8 as being indefinite should be reversed.

The rejection of claims 1-2 and 6-29 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Schauer (US Pub 2002/0145592) and Nishikawa et al. EP Patent No. 1 014 295 A2 is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites a hand-writing device for inputting characters. The hand-writing device includes an input surface and a guidance device provided on the input surface. The guidance device extends along a predetermined track for guiding hand writing strokes to follow the predetermined track. A plurality of switch elements are provided at positions on the predetermined track and at least a certain of the switch elements are triggered by a hand-writing stroke to produce an output signal when a specific character is input by handwriting.

Schauer fails to describe a guidance device extending along a predetermined track for guiding hand writing strokes to follow the predetermined track. Schauer describes a device where a user draws characters on specified keys or regions using a set of rules;

however, there is no guidance device for guiding the handwriting strokes along a predetermined track.

Nishikawa fails to overcome the deficiencies of Schauer. Nishikawa describes a touch operation guide shape for assisting a driver to locate buttons. Two finger guide grooves (30) extend in a longitudinal direction with one finger guide groove (30) extending in a lateral direction crossing the two finger guide grooves. This allows the user to guide their finger in the grooves to locate a respective nearby button. While guiding the finger in the grooves, activation of touch buttons can be prevented until the user finds a location of crossing grooves for which a desired button is located nearby. That is, the user guides the finger in the grooves in either a lateral or longitudinal direction and the displacement of the finger in the grooves prevents the operation of the finger touch operation (Col. 5, lines 40-46). A device for guiding the handwriting strokes along a predetermined track for actuating respective switches in the track for producing a respective character is not shown or suggested by Nishikawa. In claim 1, the guide track guides the user's finger in handwriting a character in which switches are activated while transitioning the finger through the guide track. The guide track, as recited in claim 1, assists the user in knowing where the user's finger is at all times without looking at the device, and assists in handwriting a character correctly so the appropriate switches are actuated. Schauer and Nishikawa fail, individually and in combination, to describe or suggest the limitations of claim 1. Therefore, claim 1 is allowable.

Claim 2 recites a first plurality of lengths and a second plurality of lengths. The first plurality of lengths includes the lengths between each two adjacent points of a first plurality of points (P_i) sequentially arranged on a closed curve, and the second plurality of lengths is formed by a length starting from a point inside of the closed curve and ending at each of a second plurality of points (P_j) on said closed curve.

Schauer fails to disclose a guide track having a closed surface. Nishikawa fails to overcome the deficiencies of Schauer. Nishikawa describes two longitudinal grooves and one lateral groove. Nishikawa fails to describe a closed surface. That is, the longitudinal

grooves and the lateral grooves are not closed on their respective ends, rather, the ends are open-ended making the guide track open. This is shown in Fig. 3 as each of the grooves extending both laterally and longitudinally have open ends thereby forming an open surface. Schauer and Nishikawa fail to describe a closed curve. Therefore, claim 2 is allowable.

Claim 6 depends from claim 1 and is therefore allowable.

Claim 7 recites that the pattern formed by the first plurality of lengths and the second plurality of lengths is non-symmetrical. Schauer fails to describe the first and second plurality of lengths. Nishikawa shows open-ended longitudinal and lateral grooves that are symmetrical. Schauer and Nishikawa fail to describe that the first plurality of lengths and the second plurality of lengths are non-symmetrical.

Claim 8 recites that the closed curve formed by the first plurality of lengths is one from the group including a rectangle, an ellipse, and a figure 8. Neither Schauer nor Nishikawa describe or show a closed curved surface. The grooves in Fig. 20 as referenced in the office action are not rectangular, elliptical or figure 8-shaped. Therefore, claim 8 is allowable.

Claim 9 recites that the plurality of switch elements are positioned on each of said first plurality of lengths, and on at least one of two lengths (P1P0 and P0P4) in said second plurality of lengths. Schauer fails to describe a closed curve surface having switch elements therein. Nishikawa fails to overcome the deficiencies of Schauer. The grooves as shown in Fig. 20 are closed off from one another and are each separately disposed over a single switch. Fig. 20 fails to describe or suggest the closed curved surface formed by the first plurality of lengths and the second plurality of lengths. Therefore, claim 9 is allowable.

Claim 10 recites that the guidance device comprises a visual guidance device that includes a visual guide track. Schauer fails to describe or suggest a guidance device. Nishikawa only describes grooves which the driver can feel. It is not described or suggested that the grooves are visually apparent to the driver. Therefore, claim 10 is

allowable.

Claims 11 and 12 depend from claim 1 and are therefore allowable.

Claim 13 recites that the cross-section of the recess is substantially trapezoidal.

Neither Schauer nor Nishikawa describe that a cross-section of the recess is substantially trapezoidal. Therefore, claim 13 is allowable.

Claim 14 depends from claim 1 and is therefore allowable.

Claim 15 recites that the cross-section of the protrusion is substantially trapezoidal. Neither Schauer nor Nishikawa describe that a cross-section of the protrusion is substantially trapezoidal. Therefore, claim 15 is allowable.

Claim 16 depends from claim 1 and is therefore allowable.

Claims 17-19 recite that the switch element is a resistive switch, an electro-optical switch, and a capacitive switch, respectively. The examiner concurs that Schauer and Nishikawa fail to disclose that the switch element is resistive, and provides no other explanation as the basis for the rejection (see page 7 of the office action). Therefore, claims 17-19 are allowable.

Claim 20 recites that the input surface includes a touch sensitive screen. The office action references Par. [0013] for suggesting the touch sensitive screen. Par. [0013] of Schauer describes a keypad or a touch pad. A touch sensitive screen is not described or suggested. Therefore, claim 20 is allowable.

Claim 21 recites that the switch element is a resistive switch comprising a keypad defined on the touch sensitive screen. Par. [0013] of Schauer describes a keypad or a touch pad; however, a keypad on a touch sensitive screen is not described or suggested. Therefore, claim 21 is allowable.

Claim 22 depends from claim 1 and is therefore allowable.

Claim 23 recites that the hand-writing input device further includes a micro-processor unit and a memory. The micro-processor unit obtains codes of characters corresponding to the switch signal combinations from a predetermined inquiry table stored in the memory. Both Schauer and Nishikawa fail to describe or suggest a

microprocessor unit and a memory. The office action references Par. [0013-0014]; however, a microprocessor and a memory unit is neither described nor suggested. Therefore, claim 23 is allowable.

Claim 24 recites that the hand-writing input device further includes a micro-processor unit and a memory, and that the micro-processor unit obtains codes of characters corresponding to the switch signal combinations from a predetermined inquiry table stored in the memory based on the combination of switch signals produced by the touch sensitive screen. For the same reasons set forth in Applicant's arguments in support of claim 23, claim 24 is allowable.

Claim 25-29 recites different interface devices for communication by the hand-writing device. Schauer and Nishikawa fail to describe any interface communication device in combination with the hand-writing device, nor does Schauer and Nishikawa suggest whether communication is required by the hand-writing device. Therefore, claims 25-29 are allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, the pending claims are now compliant. Applicant request requests withdrawal of the notice of non-compliant amendment. Favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 1/28/2010

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